Diary

1917.

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Monday. Oct. 8th.

This attempt at a diary is begun on the impulse given by the discovery in a wooden box in my cupboard of an old volume, kept in 1915, & still able to make us laugh at Walter Lamb. This therefore will follow that plan — written after tea, written indiscreetly, & by the way I note here that L. has promised to add his page when he has something to say. His modesty is to be overcome. We planned to day to get him an autumn outfit in clothes, & to stock me with paper & pens. This is the happiest day that exists for me. It rained steadily of course. London seems unchanged, making me think of the change there used to be when one was a child. There was a man buying boots who had such a taste in boots that he knew different cuts & rows of nails; was very cross when told his pair was "nice & strong" "I hate nice strong boots" he growled. Evidently there is a taste in boots. We walked through Gough Sqre; Dr Johnson's house a fine very well kept place, not so shabby as I expected. A little square folded in behind Chancery Lane, & given over to printing presses. This is the best part of London I now think to live in. Carrying my manuscript to the Times I felt like a hack much in keeping. We left it with a porter, & ran into Bruce Richmond, shining a perfect gentleman in white gloves on the Ludgate Hill platform. He flourished his hat — & disappeared. Liz has a son; therefore our fears as to paternity are set at rest.

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Tuesday Oct. 9th.

We had a horrid shock. L. came in so unreasonably cheerful that I guessed a disaster. He has been called up. Though rather dashed for 20 minutes, my spirit mounted to a certainty that, save the nuisance, we have nothing to fear. But the nuisance—waiting a week, examination at 8.30 at Kingston—visits to Craig & Wright for certificates—is considerable. It was piteous to see him shivering, physically shivering, so that we lit his gas fire. & only by degrees became more or less where we were in spirits; & still, if one could wake to find it untrue, it would be a mercy. The We took a proof of the first page of K.M.'s story, The Prelude. It looks very nice, set solid in the new type. Masses of bookbinding equipment from Emma Vaughan arrived this morning—rather a testimony to her fads, for it is all good, & I suppose she never bound a book. But this is uncharitable considering. We had a short walk by the river. As it is a fine, fairly still evening, perhaps I shall have a raid to describe tomorrow. Lottie is staying her holiday with us. I forget how many people rang us up this morning, Alix for one, who wants to start her work apparently; & we have a liver & lemon Clumber in view, living at Wimbledon, the property of a man taken for the army. The K. Shuttleworths advertise the birth of a boy with the statement "It is Perfect Gift" a good title for an Academy picture, or a Mrs Ward novel, & rather a sensible testimony to the sacrifices now desired by the rich upon their

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Wednesday Oct 10th

No air raid; no further disturbance by our country's needs: in fact L. made out in his bath that he deserved some good fortune, & opening his letters found a Cheque for £12. from a Swedish paper which never was from & yet pays its debts. And I had 4/ for myself. Late last night, I was told to have my Henry James done if possible on Friday, so that I had to make way with it this morning; & as I rather grudge time spent on articles, & yet cant help spending it if I have it, I am rather glad that this is now out of my power. And another article upon the country in Hardy & E. Brontë is suggested. We walked down the river, through the park, & back to an early tea. At this moment L is bringing the 17 Club into existence. I am sitting over the fire, & we have the prospect of K. Mansfield to dinner, when many delicate things fall to be discussed. We notice how backward the leaves are in falling & yellowing here compared with Asheham. It might still be August, save for the acorns scattered on the path — suggesting to us the mysterious dispensation which causes them to perish, or we should be a forest of oaks.

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Thursday 11th Oct.

The dinner last night went off: the delicate things were discussed. We could both wish that ones first impression of K.M. was not that she stinks like a—well civet cat that ~~we~~ had taken to street walking. In truth, I'm a little shocked by her commonness at first sight; lines so hard & cheap. However, when this diminishes, she is so intelligent & inscrutable that she repays friendship. My saying—Chaste & the Unchaste—was exaggerated by Murry for reasons of his own; reasons that make him wish all of a sudden to break with Garsington. We discussed Henry James, & K.M. was illuminating I thought. A munition worker called Leslie Moor came to fetch her—another of these females on the border land of propriety, & naturally inhabiting the underworld—rather vivacious, sallow skinned, without any attachment to one place rather than another. Today poor L. had to go the round of Drs & committees, with a visit to Squire thrown in. His certificates are repeated. He weighs only 9.6— I bought my winter store of gloves, got a reference in the London Library, & met L. at Spikings for tea. Heaven favoured us by sending a quick train. & we came home, very glad to be home, over our fire, though we had to light it, & cook up our dinner, owing to the servants off day.

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Sunday. 14th Oct.

That is an awful confession, & seems to show the seeds of death already spreading in this book. I have excuses though. We were rung up & asked to dine with the Bells in Soho, & this, I regret to say, led to much argument; we put off going to Kingston: the night was wet, & L: didn't want — old arguments in short were brought out, with an edge to them. So we went dolefully enough, found the place, behind the palace. Dined with Roger, Nina Hamnett, Saxon & Barbara &: a party such as might figure in a Wells novel: I enjoyed it though, & L: was a model of self-control. Oliver's remarks, tended to prove that he is at the centre of everything, but not so aggressive as usual. Nina has found her governess — sent, apparently by the hand of God. Then on ~~Fri~~ Saturday — what happened? Saturday was entirely given over to the military. We are safe again, & so they say for ever. Our appearance smoothed every obstacle; & by walking across Kingston we got to the doctor about 12, & all was over by half past. I waited in a great square, surrounded by barrack buildings, & was reminded of a Cambridge College — soldiers crossing, coming out of staircases, & going into others; but gravel & no grass. A disagreeable impression of control & senseless determination. A great boarhound, emblem of military dignity I suppose, strolled across by himself. L. was a good deal insulted: the Dr. referred to him as the chap with senile tremor", though a certain

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Mercifully the impression slowly vanished as we went about Richmond. Herbert came to tea, bringing the dog, Tinker, a stout, active, bold brute, brown & white, with large humorous eyes reminding me a little of Dominic Spring-Rice. We have taken him for a walk, but directly he is loosed, he leaps walls, dashes into open doors, & so behaves like a spirit in quest of something not to be found. We doubt rather if we can cope with him. Have I put down our Manx cat, also presented to us, one day this week?

L. is up at Hampstead. We are to have Alix & Lilian to dinner.

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Monday, 15th Oct

The chief fact today I think is the development & discovery of Jinker's character — all in the right direction. He was taken a long walk by the river the avenue & the Park; his spirit is great, but almost under control. He fell into the river twice; jumped out again; circled madly with a black poodle, & investigated several garden gates which seem to have a fascination for him. He is a human dog, aloof from other dogs. Alix & Lilian were much as usual last night; save that Lilian had a dark patch on the top of her head, & heard almost perfectly: the dark patch is a cup for catching sound. A more modest, amiable, & yet queerly well informed & resolute character does not exist. Her principles are invariably liberal, although her character is naturally conservative — rather a good mixture. Moreover, she has always depended on her brain, & thus discusses with great sense any question, so long as it isn't art, that comes up. Alix has the same air of ~~desperate~~ level headed desperation solid, capacious, but as low in tone as a coal cellar. However we found her very anxious to take on our work; & comes to learn tomorrow. Manx is sitting on L's knee; Jinker occasionally looks at him.

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Tuesday Oct 16th

It's odd how fate crams money into our mouths when we've got enough, & starves us when we're empty. Here we've made 270 (I think) on Bah Dias, & this morning they write to say that Mitchells is paying 4/ in £. So that brings us another £120. Two years ago we had awkward debts, & had to sell out to pay them. We both make big or fairly big cheques monthly by reviewing. We started printing in earnest after lunch; & Alix came punctually; was instructed, & left on her high stool while we took the air with Tinker who jumped from a parapet into a boat covered with tarpaulin, crashed through, & out again unhurt though surprised. We came back to find Perera, wearing his slip & diamond initial in his tie as usual; in fact the poor little mahogany coloured wretch has no variety of subjects. The character of the Governor & the sins of the Colonial Office, these are his topics: always the same stories, the same point of view, the same ~~these~~ likeness to a caged monkey, suave on the ~~see~~ surface, inscrutable beyond. He made me uncomfortable by producing an envelope of lace—"a souvenir from Ceylon Mrs. Woolf"—more correctly a bribe, but there was no choice but to take it. He being gone upstairs, Alix solemnly & slowly explained that she was bored, & also worried by her 2 hours composing, & wished to give it up. A rooted morbid depreciating of values & of motives, joined with crass laziness, leads her to this decision; as I expect it will lead her to many more. She has a good brain, but not enough vitality to keep it working. The idea weighed upon her, & I assured her there was no need for it to weigh.

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Wednesday Oct. 17th

I went up to the show of pictures at Heals this afternoon, L. having spent the morning at a Coop. conference. First I stood at Mudies counter while a stout widow chose 10 novels; taking them from the hand of Mudies man, like a lapdog, only stipulating that she wanted no vulgarity, not much description, but plenty of incident. Her companion recommended South Wind—much praised by the reviews—all clever conversation, Italy; "but I can't bear conversation—I like sensation" said the widow & gulped down another mass of sweet sensation warranted not about the war—nor about drunkards. "I must really reduce my subscription to 8 I think" she observed; & waddled off with her 10 volumes to Woking, so I guessed.

Ottoline was not at her ease; closely buttoned up in black velvet, hat like a parasol, satin collar, pearls, tinted eyelids, & red gold hair. Needless to say one saw nothing of the pictures. Aldous Huxley was there—infinitely long & lean, with one opaque white eye. A nice youth. We walked up & down a gallery discussing his Aunt, Mrs. Humphry Ward. The mystery of her character deepens: her charm, wit & character, all marked as a woman, full of knowledge & humour—& then her novels. These are partly explained by Arnold, who brought them near bankruptcy 4 years ago, & she rescued the whole lot by driving her pen day & night. We had tea with Roger. I was very much conscious of strain; Ott, languid, & taking refuge in her great lady hood, which is always depressing. They both seemed to have their guard before their eyes. I walked with her in the downpour to Oxford Street, she buying me crimson carnations, without cordiality.

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Monday Oct 15th

L. out until 5 at his Conference; & the telephone rang constantly (so I thought, as I tried to pin Mrs Meynell down in a review). 'A dull life without him'! Even Tinker's restless mind does not make up. One's right hand becomes quite ~~painful~~ cramped holding his chain. Set loose he is very random, but on the whole obedient. ^ I had my tea in the kitchen, & L. came as I finished it; we sat surrounded by kittens & dogs, who now verge upon a suspicious relationship of some sort. We now expect Ka.

This, I must say, applies to Tinker, not to L.

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Friday Oct 19th

The sweetness of Ka's nature, so we thought, is triumphing over the bureaucracy which threatened to straitwaistcoat all her charm. Not but what office life isn't a poor past which one has to lead her. She complains of falling hair; but looked to me softer & rosier, & more of the smoothness of cream than for a long while. She spent the night, was down with her leather case in hand to catch an early train. I had a letter from Nessa about servants, & so went up to Mrs Hunts this afternoon — a mysterious building, all glass compartments, leading to a space given up to the ironing & washing of pink & blue pinafores, or so it looked. Nor a parlourmaid to be had. I reached with some skilful manipulation of trains, the Aeolian Hall, paid my shilling & heard a very long & very lovely Schubert octet. Coming out, I saw a grey, thatchheaded woman without a hat — Alix; & we had tea at Spikings. She has a kind of independence & lack of concern for appearances which I admire. But as we walked up & down Dover Street she seemed on the verge of rolling up the usual veil of laughter & gossip & revealing her sepulchral despair — poor woman.

Where are you going now Alix?

I really dont know.

Well that sounds dismal! Dont you look forward to eleven tomorrow morning?

I merely wish it didn't exist thats all!"

So I left her, hatless, aimless, unattached, wandering in Piccadilly.

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Saturday Oct. 20th.

Happily, or she might say unhappily for Alix she didn't presumably wander in Piccadilly all night, or the great bomb which ploughed up the pavement opposite Swan & Edgar's might have dug her grave. We heard two soft distant but unmistakable shocks about 9.30; then a third which shook the windows; then silence. It seems that a Zeppelin came over, hovered over for an hour or two & left. We heard no more yet.

Going out for a walk, we ran into a smooth sleek provincial looking man at the pillar box; our Walter—sent by Heaven for the baptism of this book I think. And he stuck to us for hours; walked with us, came back to tea, & would have dined with encouragement which flagged. His stories were all of Lord Canterbury & Mrs Saxton Noble, & the R.A: each story throwing a gleam of light upon his own success, or tact, or prosperity. Not much gossip about the King however. He prefers the Queen. Mad Princess Victoria, who breaks into his room & announces that she means to live in his house. His complexion is that of a wax figure; his head is as smooth as an egg; he has the same cultivated taste in books, & style that he used to have; though no longer a writer, or indeed anything but a Secretary to the President, to whom he seems filial & parasitic. To us his attitude is half friendly, half suspicious. He has cast in his lot with the orthodox, but can't make up his mind to lose the other world entirely.

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Sunday Oct 21st

Lytton came to luncheon. Goldie to dinner — so we must have talked for 6 or 7 hours. We walked down the river & through the Park. Lytton in good spirits, having finished a book of 100,000 words, though now pretending that it can't be published. He means to leave London, & live "for ever" in the country. At this moment Saxon & Oliver are inspecting houses in Berkshire. It seems a good thing that one's friends should try experiments. Poor old Goldie is evidently beyond that stage. If I were malicious I should say he had reached the stage of the complete conversationalist. A long story at dinner, very skillfully told; suited to keep the High Table amused; then facts with Leonard after dinner. One finds less power of detachment in the elderly. This war seems to possess him — to leave little over. In fact he looked shrunk & worn: infinitely good, charming, devoted. Every ounce of vitality rightly applied — no time for experiments, not enough curiosity perhaps, though extreme kindliness or sympathy, which in the case of young men, becomes amorous. He has been asked to go to Russia for the Manchester Guardian; but doubts if he will get a passport.

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Monday Oct 22nd

The moon grows full, & the evening trains are packed with people leaving London. We saw the hole in Piccadilly this afternoon. Traffic has been stopped, & the public slowly tramps past the place, which workmen are mending, though they look small in comparison with it. Swan & Edgar has every window covered with sacking or planks: you see shop women looking out from behind; not a glimpse of stuffs; but "business goes on as usual" so they say. Windows are broken according to no rule, some intact, some this side, some that. Our London Library stands whole, however, & we found our books, & came home in the tube, standing the whole way to Hammersmith, & have just come in. Bert is wounded, & Nellie has gone to Lizzy. She felt it her duty & also her right — which shows how the servant is bettering her state in this generation.

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Tuesday, Oct. 23rd.

Another lapse in this book, I must confess; but if I do it against my humour I shall begin to loathe it; so the are chance of life either as to submit to lapses uncomplainingly. I remember though that we walked, printed, & Margaret came to tea. How pale these elderly women get! The rough pale skin of toads, unfortunately: M. in particular easily loses the flush of her beauty. This time we were whelmed in the Coop: revolution; the possibilities. Characters of Mr. King & Mr. May, & ~~the~~ the tail which I get an occasional swinge of reminds me of the extremely insignificant position I have in this important world. I get a little Margaret, a little anxious to find fault — a question of nothing in the right atmosphere. L: I suppose feels the same about Gordon Sqre. And then the minute care which the elderly & solicitous take of each other impresses me: "must be" question of back or Lilian will be anxious " cropping up — partly fatigue or cold always perhaps: partly the unmarried state perhaps: partly the sense of being the centre of ones world, which Margaret very naturally has. But I come always conquer me in her niceness & valiancy in spite of injured vanity.

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Wednesday 24th Oct.

L: to some confounded meeting; but also to take our selected sample of paper to Mr. Byles, whom he met coming out of the New Statesman office. I did a little printing, & then up to Janet. With time one would naturally welcome wet & wind; & already the worst chill of them is over, because one thinks of them as safety against the raid. So today I hardly grumbled, though it was heavy rain, cold, dark, inhuman, primeval weather. The Case ménage is extremely cheerful to step into; such a welcome, such anxiety about China tea or Indian, an egg, fresh bread & butter—clothes dried with a duster. Emphie spirited, discursive, inconsequentive as usual, about her dog & her Elco, & servants, & sugar & honey, all fresh & sensible, & evidently not embittered or the fruit of experience, which has not aged her, (though it has not given her much power of concentration. She went to write her notes, after tea; this is her great occupation) Janet & I talked getting on as well as usual. But I was packed off to wait 15 minutes at Finchley Road, but I should missing my train; & travelled with a mother & three boys, who made all the elderly gentlemen get cordial to watch their kisses & antics from behind their newspapers.

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Monday 25th Oct.

Owing to the ~~us~~ usual circumstances, I had to spend the day recumbent. However this is much mitigated by printing, which I do from my bed on the sloping table. We took off a proof of 2 pages, on paper the right size & liked the looks of it immensely. Our paper will be soft & yellow tinted. A melancholy letter from Ott: this morning, complaining of age & ugliness, the weariness of London & the sadness of not being wanted — all so true, I suppose, that we have accepted an invitation; though on my part rather out of pity; though also a feeling of liking for her persists. Saxon & Barbara dined with us; we are lending Asheham to the whole of that curious constellation — Nick & Saxon will revolve round Barbara; who twinkles, rosily but modestly in the light of their admiration; very neat, nice, motherly. Saxon as usual when with her — gentle & giving off a sound as of a boiling, but not over-boiling, kettle; speechless of course. As she has only simple direct things to say, L. & I were a little sleepy; but we have arranged that she is to take up printing when Nick goes back. I am going to Asheham on Monday with Saxon.

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Friday Oct. 26th -

Either it is cold or wet or windy at night, so we sleep well, though the moon is now almost full. We are faced with the problem of providing for Tinker. His spirits make him an exacting guest. We went to find a home with the Vet. today, & discovered that a Vet. lives in part of the great red house at the back gas. We ~~looking~~ looked into a room, laid for tea, the table cloth laid like a diamond across the table; a girl came; & I saw a black & white paved hall. evidently a fine house, now ~~put~~ cut up into different bits. Nelly has just come back; the usual laughter begins again. We gave Lottie 5/ for doing so well.

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Saturday Oct. 27th.

We were just setting off for Kingston Barracks this afternoon to get L's exemption card, when the telephone rang, & I heard Clive's now unfamiliar & apparently rather nervous voice asking whether he might dine with us. So the breach is to be repaired very rapidly. We walked through the Park to Kingston, failed to get the card, & then had tea in Kingston, ending by buying me a 15/ watch for my wrist—a round bright, serviceable thing, which I look at constantly, & really find it a saver of time. We were back late; & Clive came—was, I thought, very pleasant, easy, garrulous; starting a great many hares & chasing them smartly, & letting off his little tributes to himself quite inoffensively. He is so brisk & well kept mentally that I like an evening of him. L. immensely good tempered & urbane into the bargain. We gossipped; spun swiftly from thing to thing—characters, French books, the Mansfield intrigue, & so on. He wears his chestnut suit; combs his hair back to hide the bald spot, but didn't hitch his trousers so much as usual—in short he was at his best. Adrian has a Drs. order not to work on the land any longer.

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Sunday Oct 28th.

Still no raids, presumably the haze at evening keeps them off, though it is still & the moon perfectly clear. The numbers who have gone out of London this week must feel a little foolish. A perfect cold October day; sun red through the leaves which are still hanging. In order to keep as much in L's company as I could, I determined to ~~walk~~ go to Staines with him. We walked from Shepperton through Laleham, & so to Staines by the river. Flat very quiet country, or country just turning into town. Pink arm chairs were drawn up round a crowded but not luxurious tea table: a ~~multi~~ multiplicity of little plates, minute knives, people tried to help themselves. Mrs Lock, with some impediment was there, & soon Alice, Flora, Clara & Sylvia all appeared — malice suggested the whole of Kensington High Street poured into a room. The normality of it all impressed me. Nothing beautiful; nothing definite; most strange why nature has produced this type in such abundance. Then the servant said "Mrs Sturgeon"; Flora cried "I will go" & dashed from the room; everyone said Oh! Ah! How splendid! as on the stage: which indeed the whole scene might have been. ~~The~~ We went, after the 2nd act; Tinker dashed off; but was recovered. & so home, very cold, & Herbert looked in, & then we sat over the fire; & I wish it were this time next week.

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Friday 2nd Nov.

It almost is "this time next week"; though not quite — in fact not nearly, since L: is giving a lecture at Birkenhead at this present moment, & will then, I suppose travel all night across England before reaching me. I find it impossible to read after a railway journey; I cant open Dante or think of him without a shudder — the cause being I think partly the enormous number of newspapers I've been reading in. Lottie brought me all the Times's, which have accumulated. I feel as if I'd moved about a great deal; kept moving to keep myself warm. I mean Asheham & Charleston were rather in the nature of distractions, so as not to think how strange & solitary I was. Not solitary in the literal sense of course. First I spent 2 days with Saxon; much detail, rather heightened by his greater warmth of intimacy. He is still surprised by his own sensations; takes them out, sees how they fit in; very anxious to be sure of their quality. Of course the quality is very high. The worst one can say is that his lack of virility tends to prettify & belittle to some extent. But I daresay this is the effect of B's not very marked or magnificent nature. And of course, too, he's exquisite in his own way; so pure, wise, good, & sensitive. Most curiously unable to cope with anything needing decision; his instinct is obviously always to avoid risk by remaining motionless. When forced to order coal or a cab his indecision is that of a spinster of 70. And

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yet intellectually he is definite enough; definite, but meticulous. He's in love, & yet content that B. should marry Nick. There was the new Governess, Miss Edwards at Charleston; a very pretty, rather sharp, not very well bred or well educated young woman who has I should imagine lived on the capital of her large eyes, flaxen hair, straight dark eyebrows so much that she is a little out of it in an element where these attractions are discounted. There is no one to make eyes at—save Bunny, who remains impervious. But she controls Julian; talks French evidently rather more naturally than English. I meant to ask her what she thinks in. Yesterday it rained all day, so I sat in, writing about Aksakoff in the morning; sitting in the Studio after luncheon. Duncan painted a table, & Nessa copied a Giotto. I unpacked all my bits of gossip. They are very large in effect, these painters; very little self-conscious; they have smooth broad spaces in their minds where I am all prickles & promontories. Nevertheless, to my thinking few people have a more vigorous grasp or a more direct pounce than Nessa. Two little boys with very active minds keep her in exercise. I like the feeling that she gives of whole nature in use. In working order I mean; living practically, not an amateur, as Duncan & Bunny both to some extent are of course. I suppose this is the effect of children & of responsibility, but I always remember it in her. A love of the actual fact, is strong in her. Julian came with

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Lis letter into my room this morning; & at once curled up in my bed, & went on reading a book with a picture of a Bird of Paradise in it. He told me he had read Gardiner's history perhaps 50 times. He disliked kings because they were so dull; but liked Newcastle. Irish history bored him because it was shapeless, as far as I could make out; he couldn't see that either side was in the right about the American war, which annoyed him; & he thought if we had given way about the taxes we should have got our way without their knowing it, as we have done with our other colonies. Quentin called him to lessons, or he would have gone on at length. I was a good deal impressed. Suddenly to find a child reasoning & interesting these old puzzles gives one rather a shock. It seems a pity there can't be a new history for each new generation; & yet it's queer to hand over the old things to the ~~brains the~~ new brains. I daresay he'll do a lot of work one of these days; or is it a sign of age that one's interested & inclined to see great virtue in the younger generation?

But I was glad to come home, & feel my real life coming back ~~A~~ again — I mean life here with L. Solitary is not quite the right word; one's personality seems to echo out across space, when he's not there to enclose all one's vibrations. This is not very intelligibly written; but the feeling itself is a strange one — as if marriage were a completing of the instrument, & the sound given alone penetrates as if it were a violin robbed of its orchestra or piano. The rain happened of course, with us always. A dull wet night so I shall sleep.

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Saturday, 3rd, Sunday 4th. Mond. 5th Nov:

The raid didn't actually happen but with our nerves in the state they are (I should say Lottie & Nelly's nerves) the dipping down of the electric light was taken as a sign of warning: finally the lights went out, & standing on the kitchen stairs I was deluged with certain knowledge that the extinction of light is in future our warning. I looked out of the hall door, however, heard the usual patter & voices of suburbans coming home, & then, to bear out my assurance, the lights suddenly came on again. We went to bed; & to sleep. I woke 5 minutes before 7, & lay listening; but heard nothing, & was about, at 8 o'clock to flatten out all my expectations, when I heard L. at the door & there he was! With the softness of a mouse he had let himself in & breakfasted. We talked for as long as we could; things kept oozing out; sudden silences & spurts; divine contentment at being once more harmonious. L. travelled all night. The most pungent of his tales is to me the story of the arguing & enquiring & experimenting Mrs. Eckhard who thrust herself into all sorts of subjects, with L: while he cut down her trees. The palms of his hands are still black from the soot of Manchester back. We walked by the river, & to bed rather early. L: having denied that he was at all tired, tumbled asleep & slept till he was called.

On Sunday I finished my Aksakoff, & writing has the advantage of making a weekday out of the Sabbath, in spite of the clamour & blare of military music & church bells which always take place at about 11 — a noise which the other people have no right to inflict. We went up the river & through the Park, for it was a lovely warm day; &

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passed our Walter again with a man who looked a schoolmaster. No deer are to be seen in the lower park, where the cedars are. And Perera came to tea, & I shut him up alone with L: having no wish for more yards glass. I think, however, that L: is now menaced with a gold watch, owing to the success of the Ceylon business. The Daily News bursts out in three separate places in indignation.

And today we've been to London, & just come back, & sit waiting for dinner. Expecting life & smartness at least I spent 6d. upon a Magazine with Mrs Asquith's love letters, & they're as flat & feeble & vulgar & illiterate as a provincial Mrs Glyn might be; with something insolent about them, as though she condescended in scribbling — We went to the London Library, as usual; coming out ran in to the hatless dusky figure, L's Dame Secretaire; Alix; on her way to grope for facts, what L's eye finds a good deal quicker. We saw the hole in Piccadilly almost mended, though the glass is still broken. L. to Williams & Norgate about his book, which kept him so long that I had time to despise Mrs A: pretty thoroughly in Cliffords Inn tea rooms. The talk was heated; L. accused of low dealing in offering his book to Bell. (Margarets doing). Some arrangement may be come to; but the man an incompetent & stupid creature, who wont give way, & will have his rights. Hanging on a strap in the Tube was Malcolm Macnaghten; grey, spruce & prosperous looking.

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Tuesday Nov. 6th

The melancholy fact is that Tinker, at the present moment, 5.30, is lost. He was let out in the garden, got into the next door house, & finding their garden door open, presumably escaped. This was discovered at lunch time. When we had done L. went off to look in the neighbourhood, but without success. We took the Bus to Kingston, visited for the last time let us hope in our lives, the Recruiting Office. After waiting in the familiar room with the two wooden benches, the towel hanging up & the khaki coat, L. was summoned, & given his paper which states that he is "permanently & totally ~~rejected~~ disabled." However we suppose this might fetch £500 if sold. We were rather dashed by the loss of the spaniel whom we had come to like. We gave information at the Police Office. Their immense kindness & good sense much impressed us. After taking notes, ringing up Kew &c. the ~~pol~~ police sergeant said "Much obliged to you, Sir". Its melancholy to be asking about lost dogs again. After our experience with Tim even I find it hard to be altogether sanguine.

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Saturday 10th Nov.

Another melancholy fact is that I've let all these days pass, two of them, Wednesday & Thursday because I was out too late, the third Friday because I was too gloomy, & we were both too argumentative, to make writing possible. However, to deal with the dissipations first, though I dont admit they were the cause of the gloom. Nessa was up; & I had a Bloomsbury afternoon. First I took my watch to a man in Poland Street; who says it needs cleaning only; then I went to the Omega where in the semidark Roger was conveying three chattering Frenchwomen round the show, & giving the impression as usual that French manners & language have a peculiar relish for him. The pictures glimmered through the dark; & I was chiefly impressed by the Gertlers; Vanessa, too, very good; Duncan, I thought, a little pretty or tending to be. Faith vacillated about, endeavouring to make me see her show of dresses, this being private view day. We had tea in the sewing room — walking up & down munching dry cake, while Mabel stitched lining in a corner. Roger wrote letters on his knee. Nessa came on top of this; we left, & I buying an apricot coloured coat on my way. I had tea in Gordon Square, which always puzzles me under the new arrangements, there being no sitting room. She is brooding some new educational scheme — 6 boys, a tutor & a governess; has planned it all for next summer. Miss Edwards has taken to meeting soldiers on the downs, & her capacity This was the prelude to a went last long.

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party on Thursday, to which I went, through the wet & the dirt, a very long expedition for 2 hours of life, though I enjoyed it. The usual people were there; the usual sensation of being in a familiar but stimulating atmosphere, in which all the people one is in the habit of thinking of, were there in the body. A great many mop headed young women in amber & emerald sitting on the floor. Molly, Vanessa & I represented mature matronhood. Oliver seemed to be the friendly & amorous uncle. Ray one might call the grandmother, very commanding, immensely well nourished, & competent. I ~~had most~~ spent most of my time with Oliver; & as the clock struck 10 I got up & went—an example of virtue if ever there was one. And now we see how the gloom came about. L: was testy, dispiriting, & tepid. We slept. I woke to a sense of failure & hard treatment. This persisted, one wave breaking after another, all day long. We walked on the river bank in a cold wind, under a grey sky. Both agreed that life seen without illusion is a ghastly affair. Illusions wouldn't come back. However they returned about 8.30. in front of the fire, & were going merrily till bedtime, when some antics ended the day.

Today has been very cheerful, in spite of the worst assortment of elements to be had; bitter cold, stony sky, rain. L. went to the Lost Dogs Home; but without success; we have put up notices, but hope runs low. I've been without letters for 2 days.

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Sunday 11th Nov.

Sunday, I see, is becoming for us much what it was to our fathers, the day on which social life becomes swept; & as it's by the nature of things a dull solemn day, the plan isn't so bad. Still I hardly see on what principle one can approve of our luncheon at the Webbs. L: has known them;

I rashly said that I would occasionally write a page here & now V calls on me to redeem my word, & as it will take me from reading Joseph Chamberlain's speeches, I don't see why I shouldn't. We went to the Webbs for luncheon & there too were Mr & Mrs Tawney. I had met her but not him. Before they came, the Webbs told us that he was an idealist. Now that I've met him the only thing which I can add with certainty is that he is an idealist with black teeth. One of the worst Webb meals to which we have been. V. between Webb & Tawney & I between Mrs W. & Mrs T. Mrs W. began to talk almost at once about the Reconstruction Committee which she is on. She talked incessantly & every tenth word was "Committee". She has apparently succeeded in creating a committee for babies, a committee for lunatics, a committee for the sick, a committee for the disabled, & a committee for the dead; but the scheme for the Cosmos is not complete because she has so far failed

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to invent a Committee for the Able-bodied-unemployed. However
she still has hopes. Meanwhile V at one corner, & I at another
sunk in silence, while Mrs T vacuously asked W. about the
case of a woman with a broken hip in an infirmary in a
Union in Walthamstow. Immediately after luncheon we fled. Took
a bus from Westminster to Hammersmith, very cold but refreshing
after the discourse on Committees. & when we got back here
we found the room full of people — Rosalind Toynbee
Arnold T: & Ka. I liked her; small, pale, with dark
eyes, a wisp of hair, still & decided in her manner. I'm
not sure that I did much like him. He seemed rather
more commonplace & conventional than the young man
one's used to. But we talked away briskly about art &
literature; & I observed R.T. thinking, when spoken to —
a good sign. As far as one can see, she is so trained
in culture that she is almost a specialist; if one got to
know her, I mean, one would find some carefully arranged
theory sitting in all her feeling's about literature. But, & perhaps
for example, she doesnt like King Lear.
therefore, I thought her rather distinguished, more so, at any
rate than the crop-head of Bloomsbury. As we
sat, with great rolls of fur, in the shadow, I
cant verify my guess as to the crop-head in her
case. It struck me now & then that her half-
aristocratic parentage had produced a kind of
old fashioned decorum in her. Her views upon the
proper relations of cooks & ~~hou~~ Governesses were

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certainly decorous. Something I think may be due to the difference ~~been~~ between Oxford & Cambridge. It's strange to think how much one's mind has been affected by this difference — even mine has, I suppose, though I was never there, & am by nature critical of them. But Arnold seemed to me not very easy to talk directly to.

Today we've been to London, as usually happens on Monday. We went to the Omega, & as we were looking round us, in came Roger, which embarrassed me a little, partly because of his own pictures, & also because I don't like talking of art in front of him. He was in process of painting a table though, & disappeared. Then we went to Gordon Sq[re] to fetch my umbrella, 2 pictures, & a hair binder, all left there. & who should open the door but Clive; & he asked us in, & there was M.H: in one of the big armchairs, a piteous half moon of a woman, to my thinking. She seems so crushed & submissive always. I half smoked a gold-tipped cigarette, & listened to some Garsington gossip. K.M: has broken with OH: in a letter which says [illegible] "you shant treat ~~me any~~ [play] more as the Countess to [my] cook" or words to that effect. We left however, & I went to Mudies, & got the Leading Note in order to examine into R.T. more closely. & L: went in to meet Edgar for a mysterious interview; & I came home with my book, which does not seem a very masterly performance — after Turgenev, I suppose; but if you dont get your touches in the right place the method is apt to be sketchy & empty. L. is at the Suffrage; & I watch 3 fireballs glowing red hot

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Tuesday 13th Nov.

I must again register my complaint that people wont write to me. I dont write to them, but how can one? And no book from the Times either, for which I'm glad though, as I want to get on with my novel. The other day L: began his book, & has already done two chapters. He's like one of those mowing machines I used to watch from my window at Asheham; round & round they go, without haste without rest, until finally the little square of corn in the middle is cut, & all is done. We began our printing of this afternoon. Our first discovery was the important one that the springs arent even, or the balls different in weight. We — or L. put this more or less right, & we printed 300 copies of the first page, but we should be glad of another press, though the results are very good for the most part. A very cold day. Indeed, I might have remarked the beginning of winter. No leaves to speak of left on the trees now; & a sharp chill in the air. Our room after tea most emphatically a little centre of light in the midst of profound darkness. L. is making up a lecture he's giving at Hammersmith; I'm to preside over the Women's Guild.

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Wed. Nov. 14.

L: gave his lecture: I presided over my Guild. It always puzzles me to know why the women come, unless they like sitting in a room not their own gas & light free, other women on other chairs. They don't pay much attention apparently. Save Mrs Langston no one has a word to offer. Tonight Mrs Allan — a very bright eyed, shrewd, but not very enlightened woman spoke for an hour upon Congress. It might have been a report: & had little more interest. When she'd done, & I'd done no questions were asked, & she started off upon food — not the food of the country, but the individual dinner — tea provided at Torquay. Upon this subject she spoke fluently & even passionately for 15 minutes. The vices of outside traders & the virtues of self control were both illustrated at length. L. was back about 10.30, after a more profitable evening at the U.D.C. where soldiers & an Indian were among the audience. Today the servants went to see Ernest in hospital at Epsom; L. went to the Dogs Home, with no result; & finally we walked towards Kew. & noticed how the great chestnut trees as black & bare as iron. A dozen men stand ~~in~~ the fishing in the quiet water beneath the lock — a cheerful sign of undiminished stability. We looked in & spent half an hour, talking to the little printer who has 3 2 machines & 1 press for sale. The difficulty is to decide; but probably we shall buy one, & leave the refinements of perfection for later the present, which can't provide. Riddell thinks necessary, but presumably running & only cost £14. as Besides, these machines are

£15.

Again a day of no letters.

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Thursday, 15th Nov.

Again a day of no letters unless I can count my weekly reprimand in the Supt. for what I said or didn't say about Arnold's poems about nature. This time I'm almost inclined to answer — useless though it is, but I should like to protest against this flood of Oxford superiority. We printed off another page, very successfully, which took till tea time, & then we went round in the semi-darkness to the little printer, who will come round any moment now to see the room for the press. One little boy about the size of Julian works for him. Yesterday his cellar was flooded by the ladies bath next door. He is very precise in his language: perhaps the result of a semi-literary profession.

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Monday. Nov: 19th.

The little printer came round at the end of the last page, & stayed perhaps 1 hour — until Lottie had to ring the bell with meaning; but as I don't suppose he dines himself, the meaning may have been obscure. We have advanced £10, & for that bought the cutting press, & stipulated that the printing press shall be ours by Jan. 14th. The difficulty about these people is their flow of language; personal history must be told at length; I believe its a form of good manners. On ~~Sat~~ Friday ~~we~~ we went to a concert, walking out when the English piece came on into a disreputable side street clinging to the back of Bond St — reminding one rather of a Thackeray novel — a place for the footmen of the great to gamble in. Tea at Spikings, with some of the upper classes; who looked like pet dogs threatened with a cold bath. They were talking of the scarcity of motor cars. I bought a pair of stockings & then home.

The stockings were in preparation for Garsington. We came back from that adventure 2 hours ago. Its difficult to give the whole impression, save that it wasn't much unlike my imagination. People strewn about in a sealingwax coloured room: Aldous Huxley toying with great round disks of ivory & green marble — the draughts of Garsington: Brett in trousers; Philip tremendously encased in the best leather; Ottoline, as usual, velvet & pearls; 2 pug dogs. Lytton semi-

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recumbent in a vast chair. Too many nick nacks for real beauty, too many scents, & silks, & a warm air which was a little heavy. Droves of people moved about from room to room—from drawing room to dining room from dining room to Ottoline's room—all Sunday. At moments the scene got seemed to flag; & the day certainly lasted very long by these means. Fredegond was admitted in the morning; & then after tea I had perhaps an hour over a log fire with Ottoline. Going for a walk we ran into a [illegible] full of speckled & not prepossessing young men—one I entirely forget, but he jerked, as I counted 4. The most obvious was Evan Morgan, a little, red, absurdity, with a beak of a nose, no chin, & a general likeness to a very callow but strident Bantam cock, who has run to legs & neck. However he was evidently most carefully prepared to be a poet & an eccentricity, both ~~fro~~ by his conversation, which aimed at irresponsible brilliance & lack of reticence, & by his clothes, which must have been copied from the usual Shelley picture. But he was as innocent as a chicken, & ~~[illegible]~~ so foolish that it didn't seem to matter. On the whole I liked Ottoline better than her friends have prepared one for liking her. Her vitality of [illegible] seemed to me a credit to her, & in private talk her vapours give way to some quite clear bursts of shrewdness. The horror of the Garsington situation is great of course; but to the outsider

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the obvious view is that O. & P. & Garsington house provide a good deal which isn't accepted very graciously. However to deal blame rightly in such a situation is beyond the wit of a human being: they've brought themselves to such a pass of intrigue & general intricacy of relationship that they're hardly sane about each other. In such conditions I think Ott: deserves some credit for keeping her ship in full sail, as she certainly does. We were made immensely comfortable; a good deal of food; the talk had frequent bare patches, but then the particular carpet had been used fairly often. By talking severely to Philip, L: made him come up to Parliament today. He is a weak amiable long suffering man, who seems generally to be making the best of things, & seeing the best of people whom by nature he dislikes. We came home by Oxford (where I bought 2 writing books, & L. bought a pipe, & we had coffee, & saw the colleges) then to Reading, where we lunched; then to Ealing, where we changed to Richmond. On the top of our return, Alix appeared, & has just left; but I missed most of her, feeling it necessary to have a bath.

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Thursday 22nd Nov:

I boasted so much about this book & the charm of filling it from a never exhausted fount at Garsington that I'm ashamed to miss days; & yet as I point out, the only chance it has is to wait ones' mood. Ottoline keeps me by the way, devoted however to her "inner life"; which made me reflect that I haven't an inner life. She read me a passage in my praise though. So the realities do come in sometimes. On Tuesday L. went to Williams & Norgate, who offer terms for a 2/6 book—which must be considered. Evidently they want him very much, & can't altogether conceal this in spite of their wish to drive a hard bargain. I rather think I finished taking down a page. Anyhow on Wednesday Barbara came to make a start, & the machine thereupon completely struck work, one of the rollers being cut, & jibbing. & as our stock of k's ran out, she could only set 4 lines. This she did however, quickly & without fault so that she promises well. She bicycled from Wimbledon; her small crop head, bright cheeks brilliant waistcoat gave her a likeness to some vivacious bird; but I don't know that I think this very emphatic appearance particularly interesting. It always seems to say "Now all the decks are cleared for action" & action there is none. We sat at I dined with Roger & met Clive. the low square table covered with a bandanna, & eat out of six dishes each holding a different bean or lettuce: delicious food for a change.

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we drank wine, & finished with soft white cheese, eaten with sugar. Then, taking a splendid flight above personalities, we discussed literature & aesthetics:

"Since I knew Clive, I've made out a little more about the thing which is essential to all art: you see, all art is representative. You say the word tree, & you see a tree. Very well. Now every word has an aura. Poetry combines the different aura's in a sequence —" That was something like it. I said one could, & certainly did, write with phrases, not only words; but that didn't help things on much. Roger asked me if I founded my writing upon texture or upon structure; I connected structure with plot, & therefore said "texture". Then we discussed the meaning of structure & texture in painting & in writing. Then we discussed Shakespeare. & Roger said Giotto excited him just as much. This went on till I made myself go precisely at 10. And we discussed also Chinese poetry; Clive said the whole thing was too decadent to be comprehensible. Roger compared the poetry with the painting. I liked it all very much. (the talk I mean) Much no doubt is perfectly vague, not fit to be taken seriously, but the atmosphere puts ideas into one's head, & instead of having to curtail them or expatiate, one can speak them straight out & be understood — indeed disagreed with. Old Roger takes a gloomy view, not of our life, but of the world's future; but I think I detected the influence of Trotter & the herd, & so I distrusted him.

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still, stepping out into Charlotte Street where the Bloomsbury murder took place a week or two ago, & seeing a crowd swarming in the road & hearing women abuse each other & at the noise others came running with delight — all this sordidity made me think him rather likely to be right.

Today has been a perfectly warm, very still day, & we just had time after finishing off a page to reach the river & see everything reflected perfectly straightly in the water. The red roof of a house had its own little cloud of red in the river — lights let on the bridge made long streaks of yellow — very peaceful, & as if the heart of winter.

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Friday, Nov. 23rd

L. went up to London with the Rollers, & I meant to go to Kew. On the way it struck me that one ought to decide things definitely. One ought to make up one's mind. To begin then, I settled that if it was the 6d day at Kew I wouldn't hesitate but decide not to go in. It was the 6d day; I turned without pausing & had therefore to walk back. Certainly this decision brings a feeling of peace, though I rather think I was wrong. It was a warm, windless day, the sky genuinely blue. I counted my lumps of sugar, 31; but Saxon came in, & took one; hadn't slept, & so was cutting his office. I meant to read Brooke's sermons, & couldn't; & Saxon hadn't much to say. We discussed the jealousy of vanity & the jealousy of affection. He is immune from both. I have the one & not the other—perhaps from lack of cause. L. came in after seeing Squire, whose insignificance takes the lustre from reviewing rather. Then came Barbara, who wanted a bath; & Saxon followed her; & then Clive came in & we chattered away—he & I in duet for the most part—till 10.30; when he went dressed like a Newmarket gent in an immensely thick coat. I find his sprightliness a rest. No hunt for subjects is needed. He is after another before the first is disposed of. He abused Ott; but

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frankly. He discovered Lady Mary Montagu: his reviews. a publisher has offered him £40 for a book of them. He has become rather a raconteur; but there is, I think, something intellectual about him; something of the Cambridge standard, perhaps, surviving. He is no fool, though his manners suggest overwhelming reasons for thinking him one now & then — this perpetual effort to shine; to be 'in the know' — this vanity — A long talk with M. H. on the telephone interrupted him: He has become a great writer of intimate letters. He makes a business of knowing everyone, or at any rate their affairs; but I like this.

Today Saturday the usual reasons have kept me recumbent; ~~or only so~~ in the mitigated form which allows getting up & distributing. Barbara brought the new rollers. She lunched & stayed to tea, & has indeed only gone a short time, which went, I hope become a habit.

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Monday, Nov. 26th

I don't like Sunday; the best thing is to make it a workday & to unravel Brooke's mind to the sound of church bells was suitable enough. Such a wind in the night, by the way, that the milkman reported much damage down the road this morning, & raised our hopes, which were dashed on going out to see nothing smashed — not a stain of blood, or even the remnant of a hat. It was fine & wet by turns, with a high cold wind continuously. We went to Kew, & saw a blazing bush, as red as cherry blossom, but more intense — frostily red — also gulls rising & falling for pieces of meat, their crowd waved aside suddenly by three very elegant light grey cranes. We also went into the orchid house where these sinister reptiles live in a tropical heat, so that they come out in all their spotted & streaked flesh even now in the cold. They always make me anxious to bring them into a novel. L. went on to Hampstead, & I back here; where I had tea in the kitchen with the Manx cat. L. saw Margaret & discussed labour I suppose. ~~today~~ & his book. I wish my range extended so far.

Today I went into London with my ms: & Leonard went to Harrisons. (which entry was broken off somehow — but my recollection is that L: found Desmond at the L.L: together they look up the word f— in the slang dictionary, & were saddened & surprised to see how the thumb marks of members were thick on the page. My afternoon

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was by comparison chaster; though I'm hardly proud of the fact that I completely lost my way in seeking Printing House Square, & got into a maze of little bag lit, very busy & professional looking streets which I should like to investigate. The profession of journalism has its heart here; carts were standing lengthwise for bales to be dumped into. A kind man in uniform, something at a warehouse he told me, took me to the Times at last; though I (still managed to miss my way, I think it must have been, ~~though~~ for I remember walking rapidly in the wrong direction which got darker & darker until I became suspicious & went back again — but this is a week old).

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Monday Dec. 3rd

It is impossible to remember a week at a stretch, which I must confess would be my task if I were to pretend to be accurate. One day I went to the dentist; & we had Barbara here for 3 days, with disastrous results, for when we looked at her work it was so full of faults we had to take it down. I should have expected, not much intelligence, but the quickness & accuracy of a good needlewoman. This was annoying. On Saturday L: gave a lecture at Hampstead. Strange what a stamp Hampstead sets even on a casual gathering of 30 people: such clean, decorous, uncompromising & high minded old ladies & old gentleman; — the young wearing brown clothes, & the men thinking seriously, the women dowdy, the narrow shouldered; bright fires & lights & books, surrounding us, & everyone of course agreeing beforehand to what was said. Old Dr Clark indeed could quote clauses in treaties by their number; & Hobson was shrewd, judicious, kindly. Janet came in looking very well. But we had to race off in the Tube to Leicester Sqre to dine with Barbara & Saxon & a young woman called G: then on to Figaro at the Old Vic. Its perfectly lovely; breaking from one beauty into another, & so romantic as well as witty — the perfection of music, & vindication of opera.

On Sunday we heard of Cecils death, & Philips wound. We walked along the river in

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the afternoon, when L. came back from Staines, & came to an
old hollow elm tree, in the sawdust of which some one so
we guessed, had struck a match. The wind was
blowing in, & soon the flames were running high.
A crowd stopped. The first old gentleman was
so positive that I believed him; he said it was a
usual process, done to get rid of an old tree; nothing to
marvel at; no question of accident or malice; & so he
marched on with obvious contentment. The
second old gentleman admitted doubts, finally
swung round to our view that no one would burn a
tree down on the public path on a Sunday too.
Meanwhile the tree burnt rather beautifully; we
called at the police office & told them, in case the
fire might run along by means of bushes to
other trees. Leonard's cold very bad — a
horrid nuisance.

Today he struggled in & set up 21 lines. I went to
Harrison, to Mudies, to the Times, with an
article on Mr Drew, & am just come in.
Frostily cold night; stars so polished to their
brightest; so much brighter than the streets, where
I lost my way again. & as no one knows
Printing House Sq. is, one has full scope for
wandering in. I got the 2nd vol. of Ld Morley's
memories, a real solid book, I think, like the
books father used to buy, looking like them too.
One night Walter Lamb dropped in,
& his proud crest is a
little dashed I think by an ugly red.
as we sat over the fire; overpowering
snobbery.

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Wednesday 5th December

Our apprentice weighs rather heavily upon us. For one thing, though I'm always ashamed in her presence to feel this, her presence is rather in the way of complete comfort. It may be her youth, something highly polished so as to reflect without depth about her. On the other hand, she's nice, considerate; one can be open with her. The real drawback is her work. Today has been spent by L. in the futile & irritating by trying to print from one of her pages which went lock up. As the other page had to be entirely taken down & re-set, her work amounts to nil; less than nil, considering L's time wasted. A bitter cold day too. Our only outing was to the printers to borrow inverted comma's. Yesterday L. saw Philip at Fishmongers Hall. I sat up in one room, Barbara in the other. These days indoors don't provide much in the way of incident, so that at 9 o'clock, the present hour, one seems only starting on the days work — perhaps the result of passing without question straight from one occupation to another. L. reading Life of Dilke: worried by a flea up his back; I'm past the middle of Purgatorio, but find it stiff. The meaning more than the language, I think. We got Hardy's new poems, but lent them to Philip.

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Monday, 6th Dec.

When I wrote that we were only at the beginning of our days work, last night, I spoke more truly than I knew. Nothing was further from our minds than air raids: a better night, no moon up till eleven. At 5 however, I was wakened by L. to a most instant sense of guns: as if ones faculties jumped up fully dressed. We took clothes, quilts, a watch & a torch, the guns sounding nearer as we went down stairs to sit with the servants on the ancient black horse hair chest wrapped in quilts in the kitchen passage. Lottie having said she felt bad, passed on to a general rattle of jokes & comments which almost silenced the guns. They fired very quickly, apparently towards Barnes. Slowly the sound got more distant, & finally ceased; we unwrapped ourselves & went back to bed. In ten minutes, there could ~~we~~ be no question of staying there: guns apparently at Kew. Up we jumped, more hastily this time, since I remember leaving my watch & trailing cloak & stockings behind me. Servants apparently calm & even jocose. In fact one talks through the noise, rather bored by having to talk at 5 A.M. than anything else. Guns at one point so loud that the whistle of the shell going up followed the explosion. One window did, I think, rattle. Then silence. Cocoa was brewed for us, & off we went again. Having trained ones ears to listen one can't get them not to for a time; & as it was ~~close~~ after 6, carts were rolling out of stables, motor cars throbbing, &

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then prolonged ghostly whistlings which meant, I suppose, Belgian work people recalled to the munitions factory. At last in the distance I heard bugles: L. was by this time asleep; but the dutiful boy scouts came down our road & wakened him carefully; ~~It~~ it struck me how sentimental the suggestion of the sound was, & how thousands of old ladies were offering up their thanksgivings at the sound, & connecting him (a boy scout with small angel wings) with some joyful vision— And then I went to sleep: but the servants sat up with their heads out of the window in the bitter cold — frost white on the roofs, — until the bugle sounded, when they went back to the kitchen & sat there till breakfast. The logic of the proceeding escapes me.

Today we have printed, & discussed the raid, which, according to the Star I bought was the work of 25 Gothas attacking in 5 squadrons & 2 were brought down. A perfectly still & fine winters day, so about 5-30- tomorrow morning perhaps——

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Friday 7th Dec.

But there was no raid: & as the moon wanes, no doubt we are free for a month. Happily no apprentice today, which gives a sense of holiday. We have had to make it rather clear to Barbara that this job may not be followed by another. She refuses payment for last week. So there's no fault to find with her. No one could be nicer; & yet she hasn't the soul of the lake, not of the sea. Or is one too romantic & exacting in what one expects? Anyhow, nothing is more fascinating than a live person; always changing, resisting & yielding against one's forecast; this is true even of Barbara, not the most variable or gifted of her kind. Nessa was up about a governess (Mrs Brereton suggested in place of the faultfinding & man-hunting Miss E.) So I ended my afternoon in one of the great soft chairs at Gordon Square. I like the sense of space & deep large pattern one gets there. I sat alone for 20 minutes, reading a book on Children & Sex. When Nessa came we had tea & it was discovered that Clive & Mary were in the house; & Norton came in; the same party as usual. As usual to my liking: so much alive, so full of information of the latest kind; real interest in every sort of art; & in people too. I rather expect L. to disagree with all this. I judge by the amount of animation of brain produced in myself, & sense of thoughts all liberated. Not that M. H. opens her lips, but she has an air of mute sympathy. I like Norton too—

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all that brain hoarded in his head for the most exalted ends, which makes his criticism always impartial. ~~we~~ Clive spares his topics – lavishing admiration & ~~be~~ notice upon them, which doesn't make me jealous as once it did, when the swing of that pendulum carried so much of my fortunes with it; at any rate gives comfort. Maynard says that Bonar Law has dished the Government; the country entirely with Lansdowne, & the Government unable to stick to its own declarations. This was from Lord Reading. It sometimes occurs to me that there's not a single secret in politics: everything is to be guessed from the newspapers. Nessa had to go round to Rogers, & I walked with her, buying sausages & cheese for a supper party on the way. Roger is becoming one of the successes of the day as a painter of perfectly literal & very unpleasant portraits. Today (Saturday) we walked to Twickenham, where Leonard took train for Staines. I found Marny when I got back. It's 6.30 & she has just gone; so that if I don't cover the next 10 pages with family gossip & detail of all sorts, it's not for want of it. Let me put a little of it down. If I can remember – but it goes so fast, & fumes to ashes, without the atmosphere. But Florence Bishop, married to a naval Dr. & lives in a flat in Earls Court – gives you Tiptree jam for tea, & looks like a picture, & is very poor, owing to old Bishop's failings; but her husband is an elderly man, & now takes charge of wounded soldiers in trains. And we

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havent had butter for a long time, & sometimes we cant even
get the nice kind of margarine, but I wont deal at
Barkers, not after the evidence at that fire. Wrights
coal shed burnt down behind us the other night — all
that coal wasted, & once last winter we'd run out.
It was a Saturday too, & I went from shop to shop
begging even a scuttlefull, & who should I meet at
Knightsbridge but Kitty Maxse? & she said
O I'll give you coal — why I've got 2 cellars full:
& sure enough that very afternoon up she drove
in a taxi with a sack full, & that saw us through,
but I've not seen her since that day. So distinguished
looking, & not a year older, though she must be
50. Well, I'm 55, & Joad 43 — but one forgets
peoples ages, & I'm sure I dont feel old: & you look
like 25 — And Nessa as lovely as ever I suppose!
[here followed the whole history of Nessa, Clive, Duncan,
Adrian & ourselves]
Dear me, how we all move about — partly owing to
the war to be sure; though I do see some young old
friends still, like Miss Harris, who paints, you know,
& very well too, but she wont show anything because
she only considers herself an amateur, & she's
very busy now with war work. And Hilda
Lightbody, I see her; though she's making papier
maché splints all day — yes, a widow she is
her husband having been a great invalid — And
I sometimes see Adeline, who lives with Hervey,
at Hastings for the winter, not having meant
to stay there, but they went for a change &

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there wasn't any reason why they shouldn't stay — near the sea, of
course; & Millicent not very far off. Millicent's boy died
you know, & Virginia milks cows at Lord Rayleighs place in
Essex. She prefers horses, but she couldn't get horses, & she's
very fond of cows. Yes, Millicent still lives at Hastings,
though she doesn't like it, but Vere does, because of the sea
& they know a great many people, & Millicent got up
a series of dances for young people last winter, though
she didn't feel like dancing I'm sure, & she keeps
the Musical Festival going, though she can't do any
war work; & Augusta always loved Kent, & now
they've got a house in Kent, & a little garden, & Bob
works for a neighbour sometimes, & so they get
along you know — all the children out in the world
now. & its wicked how they grow up — Halford
quite a big boy — with a poetic side, but very
practical I'm glad to say, & Janet very like Madge;
& I wish Madge would write. Perhaps she'd be
happier then, though I don't think Madge could
ever be really happy, but its a wonderful piece of
work — I'm sure Will owes her a great deal.
I don't think I've grumped so much for years. And
Cousin Mia dead, & Aunt Mary killed — yes. that was
extremely sad, but better than a lingering illness I
daresay. And Herbert in all the papers; but Lettice
doesn't like London at all, but Herbert does, & she
goes back to Sheffield for change of air & when the
raids come, we go & sit with the Wales's on the
ground floor. But they ought to tell me about the
Bugler. Why, when they first blew, I thought it might be
the Germans themselves, & I went out onto the landing
& met a lady, though it was 2, dressed for going out — & —
she told me — —

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Sunday, Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday; Wednesday being the 12th of Dec.

A melancholy record — the truth is, when we're not printing & therefore don't have Barbara here, & we do jobs in London, & get back late — I'm disinclined to get out pen & ink. On Sunday Lytton came to tea. I was alone, for L: went to Margaret. I enjoyed it very much. He is one of the least, most supple of our friends; I don't mean passionate or masterful or original, but the person whose mind seems to reflect most impressions & is least starched by any formality or impediment. There is his great gift of expression of course, but writing is never (to me) at its best in writing; but making him in some respects the most sympathetic & understanding friend to talk to. Moreover, he has become, or now shows it more fully, curiously gentle, sweet tempered considerate; & if one adds his peculiar flavour of mind, his wit, his infinite intelligence — not brain but intelligence — & he is a figure not to be replaced by any other combination. Intimacy seems to me possible with him as with scarcely any one; for, besides tastes in common, I like & think I understand his feelings — even in their more capricious developments; for example in the matter of Carrington. He spoke of others, by the way, though with a candour not flattering, not at all malicious.

"That woman will dog me" — he remarked. "She won't let me write, I daresay"

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"Ottoline was saying you would end by marrying her."
"God! the mere notion is enough ~~to~~ — One thing I know — I'll never marry any one—"
"But if she's in love with you?"
"Well, then she must take her chance."
"I believe I'm sometimes jealous—"
"Of her? That's inconceivable—
"You like me better, don't you?"
He said he did; we laughed; remarked on our wish for an intimate correspondent; but how to overcome the difficulties? Should we attempt it? Perhaps. He brought us his Gordon. Next day he was to take the book to Chatto & Windus.

Monday; today was a string of meetings for L. Out to lunch, to Philip, to another meeting & not back till 8.30; I pacing the room in some anxiety till I heard him. My afternoon was very nearly normal; to Mudie's, tea in an A.B.C. reading a life of Gaudier Brzeska; home again; wet soft vapourous day.

Tuesday: the infliction of our apprentice. Things on the whole went better; & L. & I slipped out for half an hour before tea, into the brownish red light of the wintry afternoon. The green gives a very good sample of the sky & bare trees. One or two old rooks nests in the upper twigs. Back to tea; & Perera came for private talk. I own that I sounded the very depths of boredom

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with Barbara. She gives out facts precisely as she received them — minute facts about governesses & houses. And no doubt of her own adequacy crosses her mind; all so nice, honest, sensible, how can there be a flaw? Indeed, one figures her nature as a flawless marble, impervious, unatmospheric. And the time passed; she missed her train; waited on for another — waited until 6-10; & we were to dine at 7 — & my evening petted away without sensation, save of one standing under the drip of a water spout. My excuse for such extravagance is that I had to go on to the Guild today. No speaker came, & we were clearing the table at 9 after a lot of letter reading & intermittent discussion when a private omen came true. The speaker arrived. A Mrs Moore from Kensal Rise: middle class; dressed in velvet; vulgar, fluent. Spoke on propaganda for 20 minutes. More words than brain, & indeed she couldn't explain her sayings, & was perturbed to the satisfaction of Mrs Langston, when I showed how much I knew. But I admired the way in which she got her steam up when we were all anxious to go. The women said it was a splendid speech; sentences that melt into each other impress them.

Wednesday. This morning ruined by the tears & plaints of Lottie, who thinks her work too hard, & finally demanded higher wages, which she could easily get, & so could Nell. I lost my temper, & told her to get them then. Up came

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Nelly in a conciliating mood regretting Lottie's outburst; though pointing out the hardships of our printing-room so untidy - work endless; had meant to ask a rise in February - Eugenie's wages raised - of course we had to pay extra for food, but then we'd got to — We were very amicable; no difficulty about money; but L's taunts seemed to me unpleasant - I charged her to find out the truth - if there is such a thing in the midst of that bluster - At last she went. Walked by the river, having done a little printing

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Thursday, Dec. 13th.

By careful arrangement I limited the reconciliation scene with Lottie to 15 minutes, at eleven sharp. She sobbed; repented; took back everything she'd said; told me how her temper had led to constant rows at "Frys" as they call it; all a fabrication about over work,—the more people we had & the more mess we made the better she liked it. She begged me not to tell anyone; she kissed me & went off, like a chastened child, leaving me with a mixture of pity & (I suppose) self complacency. The poor have no chance; no manners or self control to protect themselves with; we have a monopoly of all the generous feelings—(I daresay this isn't quite true; but there's some meaning in it. Poverty degrades, as Gissing said) Barbara had a cold & didn't come, bring relief certainly. But that's inaccurate; she came after luncheon, & brought a letter from Nessa who invites her to be governess there for a month, pending Mrs Brereton. Barbara was so sensible, & ~~so~~ matter of fact that I repented & certainly she treats us with the strictest honesty, ~~two~~ making a serious undertaking of the printing, (here the light went out) which is creditable. & one could depend upon her, I fancy, to keep the exact letter of her promise. She went off directly after tea to conduct one of those curious gatherings of Nick, Oliver, & Saxon ~~&~~ Carrington the worst about their house in the country.

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of furnishing has fallen of course upon Carrington but Barbara is a good second & keeps the accounts, which will end, I assured her, by drawing all her money on things she'll never be paid for.

Friday, Dec: 14th

Today we went to see Philip at Fishmongers Hall. Rather a strange place a few feet from London Bridge. A pompous hall, with a porter, a gigantic fire for that porter, a German gun; a within banisters draped with crimson folds of stuff, as if for a royal visit; Nelson's flag in a glass case; Dick Whittington in plaster standing in an alcove; a branching staircase taking one to a great gallery now divided into cubic cubicles. Two or three nurses sat sewing outside. We found Philip up, his chair by the open window, looking into the street, which was noisy & just catching sight of the river. I saw a notice warning patients not to throw cigarette ends out, as they might catch inflammable bales upon the wharf. To me, Philip looked well; though there was that absentmindedness which one sees in Nick. I suppose to Philip these days pass in a dream from which he finds himself detached. I can imagine that he is puzzled why he doesn't feel more. He still talks of "we" & "our" things. I thought he must look to going back again but he talked with something like hope.

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very rarely & cheerfully — about horses & books, & so on. Another man — a great burly Cavalry officer was reading his book in a far corner; unused to reading books, I should think. Nurses seemed very kindly. A feeling of the uncleanness of it all, breaking these people & mending them again, was in the air, I thought. We asked Philip to Asheham, when he can move. Home to find Sidney already in the chair by the fire. He was in very good feather, & rolled out the word "I" with a sort of tremor of pride; he has indeed negotiated treaties in Paris since we met. Being self conscious & diffident his triumphs give him enormous pleasure. There is the same tremor of half incredulous self approbation in his tone when he talks of his children. I laughed at him about our quarrel. He had thought it all over, so he said — as if it mattered; & was highly pleased by the removal of the cloud. Saxon came, very late, to dinner. I gave it him, & he told me how selfish Alix was — can't pack her own boxes; waits for Carrington. Saxon attributes this to love; I believe it is imitation of the beloved. She has, picked it up from James, sees it in him & thinks, I believe, it stands for the consciousness of superiority. Saxon stayed till eleven; Sydney stayed the night; & he only spoke 3 times; & then rather pedantically in his old way, which he has rather dropped lately.

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Saturday. 15th Dec.

A cold but sunny day. It seems long since we had a day to ourselves. No printing done. We took a walk in the old style through the Park, down the avenue & back by the river, which was flooding up fast, & cut us off, making us creep along a railing so as to reach dry land. The streets remind me of Cambridge streets. People walk down the middle. This is partly because of the queues waiting to buy at Liptons. One has some difficulty in keeping on the pavement & the motor lorry are always grazing people's sides. Home & a large tea by ourselves. Masses of papers. Perera, of course, to consult once more; & he is still sitting with L. in his room.

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Monday Dec. 17th

Monday, as I think I've noted before, is our marketing day—but I'm forgetting Molly MacCarthy & Walter Lamb last night— The thing arose in this way. Wat offered us the loan of his Norfolk maps. Thinking it a little cool to borrow without invitation we asked him to bring them. We then found ourselves faced with the unbearable prospect of unmitigated Walter. But who to get at the last moment? The Strachey household denuded owing to Tidmarsh; Squire engaged; at last the idea of Molly came to me, & Heaven granted this favour. I'm not sure that her deafness doesn't lend her a kind of piquancy (like a stammer); she ———

I forget who it was that came in at this moment; & I have excuse for forgetting, since its now Thursday, 3rd Jan: 1918. & we're just back from Asheham. I remember though that the last days were full of people. Walter & Molly as I began to relate. She has sent her novel to Chatto & Windus, & calls it The Band or the Pit, or Ring Fence. The last dull I think. W. L: spruce & a little supercilious when the Royal Family appeared, as it did: wouldn't shoot at those rabbits again for my diversion. And then I can remember that we had Ka; who contemplates resignation; & then, the night after, Bob; with his pockets bulging with Georgian poetry, his talk all of books & prices, asked for printing, & number of

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[illegible] sold, in the midst of which Nelly burst in to say that the Take Cover had sounded. So we had our dinner partly in the cellar; Bob talking at such a rate that it was necessary to listen at the window for the guns, loud enough though they were. I remember him attached to a large plate of suet pudding in the basement, & L. sitting on a wooden box in the coal hole reading the paper & finding one of my red pens there. All Clear sounded about 10: a bad raid, though, & Barbara & Saxon suffered more than we did at Hampstead.

After that—the very next night—we went to the 17 Club dinner; a great deal of eating by some 200 people at long tables. Waiters thudding swing doors imitated guns so successfully that various officials came round & warned me of a raid. Jos: made a speech. I noticed poor Marjorie listening with her eyes in her lap. She came up from Wallington & was dressed, poor creature in muslin picked out with red roses, & cut low; though every one else was more or less in working clothes, & fur capes. I was caught in the net of Sylvia Whitham, who cross examined me about her husbands novels; & in despair of revealing my true opinion I pretended never to have read Wolfsang—the one most suitably, of all our friends she's the one to have a bomb dropped next door, & to receive it without surprise: And she's

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taking to literature, & begins by translating Flaubert—a remarkable instance of a person without gift of any kind, always pushing along in the wake of other more advanced people.

Next day we went to Asheham, & the journey was the worst in our record—5 hours; spent mostly outside Clapham Junction; fog, bitter cold; every move stopping short in a minute or two. Motored out I remember, & found the roads under snow; but very pleasant coming in to the drawing room, save that we were without milk.

One of the coldest & finest of Christmases. Rather to our relief, we spent it alone, Ray falling ill, Ka coming for week end, & Nessa's children. There was the usual visit from Maynard & Clive; my usual failure to get to Charleston corresponding to Nessa's failure to get to Asheham. I spent a night there, & enjoyed myself, through the rather obscure barriers of poor Bunny who took to his bed at one point, without sympathy from Nessa, who had given 'put him to bed, she said, for no perceivable cause.' Duncan came back from London with gossip for us; chiefly about Alix & a party at the play who broke the partition & dropped cigarettes, & had to be asked to leave. But what I like most about Asheham is that I read books there; so divine it is, coming in from a walk to have tea by the fire & then read & read—say Othello—say anything. It doesn't seem to matter what. But

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one's faculties are so oddly clarified that on the page detaches itself in its true meaning & lies as if illumined, before one's eyes; seen whole & truly, not in jerks & sparks as so often in London. And then the trees, spare & leafless; the brown of the plough, &, yesterday, Downs mountainous through a mist, which isn't palpable, for only detail vanishes, & the line grows larger & larger, & ~~the~~ fires can be seen ~~through it~~ burning through. Solitary sportsmen beat up duck & snipe on the marshes. Windows were almost always frozen in the morning, & ~~grass~~ each blade rough with frost. Partridges would come & sit in the field, lifeless little lumps they looked, half stiff with cold perhaps.

The diary habit has come to life at Charleston. Bunny ~~&~~ sat up late on the Old Year's night writing, & Duncan came back with a ledger, bought in Lamb's Conduit Street. The sad thing is that we daren't trust each other to read our books; they lie, like vast consciences, in our most secret drawers. Clive, by the way, enlivened Christmas by a small book of verse — the prose fantastically foppish, the verse very pretty & light, trivial mind (by which I mean not altogether to L's mind). He can do his little Owl very efficiently. Anyhow, I prefer it to the last Georgian effort — bound in blue this year, & housing that ridiculous Squire.

So we come to an end of the year.

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& any attempt to sum it up is beyond me or even to cast a final glance at the evening paper, with news from Russia, which has just come in & drawn L. to remark ~~that~~

"A very interesting state of things —
"And what's going to happen?".
"No human being can foretell that"

The End.